

# **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PAWTUCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**Monday, December 29, 2014 at 6:30 PM**

**School Administration Building, 2nd Floor Conference Room**

**286 Main Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860**

## **Minutes**

### **I. Meeting will come to order**

**The Chairman, Mr. Araujo, called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM.**

#### **a. Roll call**

**Ms. Bonollo-here; Ms. Cano-here; Ms. Nordquist-here; Mr. Spooner-here; Mr. Araujo-here**

**Also in attendance were Mrs. Patricia DiCenso, Superintendent of Schools; Mrs. Lee Rabbitt, Assistant Superintendent; Ms. Kathleen Suriani, Assistant Superintendent; Ms. Melissa Devine, Chief Financial Officer and Mr. Jon Anderson, Legal Counsel.**

**Mr. Coughlin and Mr. Tenreiro were not present.**

#### **b. Pledge of Allegiance**

**The Chairman, Mr. Araujo, led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.**

## **II. Public Participation**

**Comments from the public are invited at this time. Citizens wishing to speak should sign in with the Committee Chair before speaking. The Committee is precluded from discussing or acting on items raised by Public Comment, which are not already on the agenda. Public comment will be included in the minutes of the meeting**

**Mr. Jhonny L.: Good evening, I am a resident of Pawtucket and a member of the Black Contractors Association and Latino Contractors Association. We are looking for the \$32M bond projects and want to make sure that both the black and brown contractors are used on these projects and that we get notified.**

## **III. Old Business/Action Items**

**a. Approval of School Food Service Contract—RIDE Approved 12/22/2014**

**Mr. Spooner moved to approve the food service contract to Aramark Educational Services. Ms. Cano seconded.**

**Ms. Nordquist: Were there any questions on this contract?**

**Mrs. DiCenso: The transition went very smoothly and all personnel were retained except for one management position and it was their**

**choice. We no longer have a guarantee so we have to pay careful attention to this and Melissa has informed Aramark that we need a monthly report.**

**Unfortunately, the last company left us with a negative balance for unpaid lunches and we are working to collect those monies.**

**Ms. Devine: We're looking to put a policy in force. Right now there isn't one. I am working with Aramark.**

**Ms. Nordquist: We have to send money to Sodexo?**

**Ms. Devine: No.**

**Ms. Nordquist: I'm willing to bet Sodexo was willing to let those kids eat and probably some families didn't submit their application and qualify for free or reduced lunches.**

**Ms. Devine: If it goes on for one whole week, we cannot go back. It may be uncollectable, but we will try.**

**Mr. Araujo: I believe Aramark will be meeting with RIDE as the state appointed vendor.**

**Ms. Bonollo: I understand that our I. T. Department had to link up with RIDE to track families.**

**Mrs. DiCenso:** We have that information and direct certifications go through, but at the beginning of this year, we had a large drop from last year to this year and it wasn't being processed quickly enough.

**Ms. Bonollo:** I would send my check in but one student would come home and say I can't have a lunch.

**Ms. Devine:** No one should be told they don't have a lunch. We're hoping to put in place to implement a process where no student walks away hungry.

**Mrs. DiCenso:** This is not another we're not going to feed the children. They feed the children and would bill us with the guarantee. This year they left us with a deficit.

**Ms. Nordquist:** There's a big difference in free and reduced and full paid lunch.

**Mrs. DiCenso:** We are going to propose a central registration location so all forms will be complete.

**Ms. Cano:** How were employees with the transition?

**Mrs. DiCenso:** It went very well.

**Mr. Anderson: The contract includes language that they have to take them whole. The Union said they were satisfied with it.**

**Roll call**

**Ms. Bonollo-yes; Ms. Cano-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes; Mr. Araujo-yes**

**Motion carries with five members present.**

#### **IV. New Business/Action Item**

**a. Approval of Request from Committee Member to approve new Request for Proposals (RFP) with new Health and Safety Bond.**

**Ms. Cano moved to approve a new Request for Proposal (RFP) for the \$32M health and safety bond for architectural and engineering services for Stage III and Stage IV following all Rhode Island procurement and purchasing laws as required by the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) including to require minority participation. Mr. Spooner seconded.**

**Mr. Anderson: I will need clarification from RIDE and also due to the size, the School District add some integrity with this.**

**There were some questions with the \$8M bond and you have a contract that was signed in April, 2012 and approved by the school committee at that time. You are bound by that contract. I was not the legal counsel. There was a different superintendent, a different business manager and school committee. I think it's a good idea to put out a request for proposal.**

**Mrs. DiCenso: There is approximately \$500,000 left of the \$8M and that was earmarked for H.V.A.C. at Jenks.**

**Ms. Nordquist: What caused you to bring this on? I know it has to go on about excluding minority groups. I do not recall excluding the black or brown. I don't usually talk like that. What brought this up?**

**Mrs. DiCenso: Minorities include women too. This is going on throughout the state. It's not just for us.**

**Mr. Anderson: I think the School District is on very solid ground to encourage businesses that qualify as minorities and doing outreach to communities for opportunities are fair and no criteria makes it impossible for them to bid. i.e. a large bond level set too high. I will encourage the school district to do the outreach, but I also don't want anyone to say we're going to get the certain bid.**

**Ms. Cano: My intention is for everyone to get a fair shot at the job of this \$32M bond. It does not have to do with any particular instance.**

**Ms. Nordquist: I've never heard of this happening before. It's never come up before. I've never seen anyone excluded.**

**Ms. Bonollo: I thought we always posted in a public place.**

**Ms. Devine: In my tenure we have always published in the Providence Journal.**

**Ms. Bonollo: Why do we have to reach out?**

**Mr. Anderson: I 'm not telling you, I'm suggesting to advertise in Ojournal which is a Portuguese Newspaper.**

**The law doesn't cover this particular job goes to this particular group.**

**Mrs. DiCenso: When we created that last bond, we created it as one great grant project. Not only does that always not always work well, they subcontract.**

**The teachers were concerned about the keyless entry and you don't want to be waiting three years. How we write it we will have more opportunities for companies to bid. My huge concern is the safety getting slipped in somewhere.**

**Ms. Nordquist: I'm in agreement and there are some good ideas. We asked everybody in the community to vote on the bond and it's good**

**to have these discussions to get this out in the open.**

**Ms. Cano: I think it's good to have continuity to have the same firm for architectural and engineering.**

**Mrs. DiCenso: When you write it as a huge job, you lock out some.**

**Mr. Araujo: What you mention about ethics and bringing forward approval make sure everything is clean.**

**Ms. Bonollo: can we also be informed of the type of outreach and where it's being advertised?**

**Mrs. DiCenso: Sure.**

**Roll call**

**Ms. Bonollo-yes; Ms. Cano-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes;  
Mr. Araujo-yes**

**Motion carries with five members present.**

**V. Adjournment**

**Mr. Spooner moved to adjourn. Ms. Cano seconded.**

**Voice vote carries with five members present.**

**The Chairman, Mr. Araujo, adjourned the special meeting of the Pawtucket School Committee on Monday, December 29, 2014 at 7:05 PM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Clerk**

**Approved by School Committee 1/13/2015**